

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

By this Amendment, withdrawn claims 16-18 and claim 21 are canceled, claims 19 and 33 are amended and claims 34-36 added. Claims 19-20, 22, 24-30 and 33-36 are pending, with claims 24-30 withdrawn from consideration pursuant to a restriction requirement.

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the statement in the Office Action at paragraph 7 that claim 21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Previously pending claim 21 depended directly from base claim 19. Base claim 19 is therefore amended to incorporate all the limitations of previously pending claim 21, so as to render claim 19 and dependent claims 20, 22 and 33-34 allowable. Rejoinder and allowance of withdrawn claims 24-30, which depend from claim 19, are accordingly requested.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness rejections over Ahola et al. '802 and Ahola et al. '339 are respectfully requested.

In addition, new claims 34-36 patentably distinguish over the Ahola et al. patents for at least the following reasons. Claim 35 corresponds to previously presented claim 20 rewritten in independent form. Claim 36 corresponds to claim 35, wherein the Markush group does not list a trialkoxysilane. Claim 34 corresponds to claim 20, wherein the Markush group does not list a trialkoxysilane.

The organomodified alkoxysilanes disclosed in Ahola et al. '339 differ from the silanes specified in claims 34-36. In particular, in order to impart sufficient hydrophobicity, the alkyltrialkoxysilanes of claim 35 are required to have 8-18 carbon atoms, whereas the cited Ahola et al. patents disclose only alkylalkoxysilanes having short-chain alkyl groups (e.g., methyl, dimethyl and ethyl) as exemplary alkylalkoxysilanes. Claims 34 and 36 specify silanes other than alkyltrialkoxysilanes.

Moreover, claim 34 depends from base claim 19, and therefore distinguishes over the cited art for at least the same reasons as claim 19.

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For at least the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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